

Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan (HPTRP) Gillnet Fishing Restrictions



CLOSURE AREAS UNDER THE HARBOR PORPOISE TAKE REDUCTION PLAN (HPTRP)

All persons owning or operating gillnet vessels must remove all gillnet gear capable of catching Northeast (NE) multispecies from the following areas and may not use, set, haul back, fish with, or possess on board such gear, unless stowed in accordance with the net stowage requirements. In certain closure times and areas, fishing is authorized (1) for gillnets that have been modified to include bycatch reduction devices called "pingers" (see page 4), or (2) for large or small mesh gillnets that meet the required gear modifications (see page 4). Vessels using pelagic gillnets/baitnets (see page 4 for definition) are exempt from these closures and restrictions.

New England Closure Areas

- **Northeast Closure Area** - This area is closed August 15 through September 13 to all vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies.

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Maine shoreline | 68°55.0' W. |
| 43°29.6' N. | 68°55.0' W. |
| 44°04.4' N. | 67°48.7' W. |
| 44°06.9' N. | 67°52.8' W. |
| 44°31.2' N. | 67°02.7' W. |
| Maine shoreline | 67°02.7' W. |

- **Mid-Coast Closure Area** - This area is closed September 15 through May 31 to all vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies except gillnet vessels using pingers deployed on the nets according to the specifications found on page 4. Vessel operators are required to have a certification of pinger training aboard the vessel while operating in this area (see page 4 for details).

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 42°30' N. | Massachusetts shoreline |
| 42°30' N. | 70°15' W. |
| 42°40' N. | 70°15' W. |
| 42°40' N. | 70°00' W. |
| 43°00' N. | 70°00' W. |
| 43°00' N. | 69°30' W. |
| 43°30' N. | 69°30' W. |
| 43°30' N. | 69°00' W. |
| Maine shoreline | 69°00' W. |

- **Massachusetts Bay Closure Area** - This area is closed December 1 through February 28 (or 29) and April 1 through May 31 to vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies except gillnet vessels using pingers deployed on the nets according to the specifications found on page 4. Vessel operators are required to have a certification of pinger training aboard the vessel while operating in this area (see page 4 for details). **This area is closed March 1 through March 31 to all vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies.**

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 42°30' N. | Massachusetts shoreline |
| 42°30' N. | 70°30' W. |
| 42°12' N. | 70°30' W. |
| 42°12' N. | 70°00' W. |
| Cape Cod shoreline | 70°00' W. |
| 42°00' N. | Cape Cod shoreline |
| 42°00' N. | Massachusetts shoreline |

- **Cape Cod South Closure Area** - This area is closed December 1 through February 28 (or 29) and April 1 through May 31 to vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies except gillnet vessels using pingers deployed on the nets according to the specifications found on page 4. Vessel operators are required to have a certification of pinger training aboard the vessel while operating in this area (see page 4 for details). **This area is closed March 1 through March 31 to all vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies.**

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Rhode Island shoreline | 71°45' W. |
| 40°40' N. | 71°45' W. |
| 40°40' N. | 70°30' W. |
| Massachusetts shoreline | 70°30' W. |

- **Offshore Closure Area** - This area is closed November 1 through May 31 to vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of NE catching multispecies except gillnet vessels using pingers deployed on the nets according to the specifications found on page 4. Vessel operators are required to have a certification of pinger training aboard the vessel while operating in this area (see page 4 for details).

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 42°50' N. | 69°30' W. |
| 43°10' N. | 69°10' W. |
| 43°10' N. | 67°40' W. |
| 42°10' N. | 67°40' W. |
| 42°10' N. | 69°30' W. |
| 42°50' N. | 69°30' W. |

- **Cashes Ledge Closure Area** - This area, which is located within the Offshore Closure Area, is closed February 1 through February 28 (or 29) to vessels using sink gillnet gear or gillnet gear capable of catching NE multispecies.

| <u>Latitude</u> | <u>Longitude</u> |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 42°30' N. | 69°00' W. |
| 42°30' N. | 68°30' W. |
| 43°00' N. | 68°30' W. |
| 43°00' N. | 69°00' W. |
| 42°30' N. | 69°00' W. |

Mid-Atlantic Closure Areas

- ▶ **Waters Off New Jersey Closure Area** - This area is closed January 1 through April 30 to vessels using large or small mesh gillnet gear unless the gillnet gear meets the gear modifications specified below. **This area is closed April 1 through April 20 to all vessels using large mesh gillnet gear.**

This area is defined as all state and Federal waters off New Jersey, bounded on the north by a line extending eastward from the southern shoreline of Long Island, NY at 40°40' N. latitude, on the south by a line extending eastward from the northern shoreline of Delaware at 38°47' N. latitude (Cape Henlopen, DE), and on the east by the 72°30' W. longitude.

- ▶ **Mudhole Closure Area** - This area is closed February 15 through March 15 to vessels using large or small mesh gillnet gear.

This area is defined as waters off New Jersey bounded from the point 40°30' N. latitude where it intersects with the shoreline of New Jersey east to its intersection with 73°20' W. longitude, then south to its intersection with 40°05' N. latitude, then west to its intersection with the shoreline of New Jersey.

- ▶ **Southern Mid-Atlantic Waters Closure Area** - This area is closed February 1 through April 30 to vessels using large or small mesh gillnet gear unless the gillnet gear meets the gear modifications specified below. **This area is closed February 15 through March 15 to all vessels using large mesh gillnet gear.**

This area is defined as all state and Federal waters off the States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, bounded on the north by a line extending eastward from the northern shoreline of Delaware at 38°47' N. latitude (Cape Henlopen, DE), east to its intersection with 72°30' W. longitude, south to the 33°51' N. latitude (NC/SC border), and then west to its intersection with the shoreline of the NC/SC border.

Mid-Atlantic Management Measures for the Large Mesh Gillnet Fishery - *Gillnets With Mesh Size Greater Than 7 Inches (17.78 cm) to 18 Inches (45.72 cm)*

- ▶ **Floatline Length:**
 - New Jersey Mudhole - Less than or equal to 3,900 ft (1188.7 m).
 - Waters Off New Jersey (excludes Mudhole) - Less than or equal to 4,800 ft (1463.0 m).
 - Southern Mid-Atlantic waters - Less than or equal to 3,900 feet (1188.7 m).
- ▶ **Twine Size:** All Mid-Atlantic Waters - Greater than or equal to .90 mm (.035 in).
- ▶ **Tie-Downs:** All Mid-Atlantic Waters - Required.
- ▶ **Net Cap:** All Mid-Atlantic Waters - 80 nets.
- ▶ **Net Size:** A net must be no longer than 300 feet (91.4 m) long.
- ▶ **Net Tagging:** Requires all nets to be tagged by January 1, 2000.

Mid-Atlantic Management Measures for the Small Mesh Gillnet Fishery - *Gillnets with Mesh Size of Greater Than 5 Inches (12.7 cm) to Less Than 7 Inches (17.78 cm)*

- ▶ **Floatline Length:**
 - New Jersey waters - Less than or equal to 3,000 feet (914.4 m).
 - Southern Mid-Atlantic waters - Less than or equal to 2,118 feet (645.6 m).
- ▶ **Twine Size:** All Mid-Atlantic waters - Greater than or equal to .81 mm (.031 inches).
- ▶ **Tie-Downs:** All Mid-Atlantic waters - Prohibited.
- ▶ **Net Cap:** All Mid-Atlantic waters - 45 nets.
- ▶ **Net Size:** A net must be no longer than 300 feet (91.4 m or 50 fa) long.
- ▶ **Net Tagging:** Requires all nets to be tagged by January 1, 2000.

TRANSITING MARINE MAMMAL SEASONAL CLOSURES

Vessels may transit these areas during the closure periods, provided that the gear is stowed in accordance with the regulations summarized below.

GEAR STOWAGE REQUIREMENTS

All sink gillnets are covered with canvas or other similar material and lashed or otherwise securely fastened to the deck or rail, and all buoys larger than 6 inches (15.24 cm) in diameter, high flyers, and anchors are disconnected.

PINGER REQUIREMENTS AND PELAGIC GILLNET EXEMPTION

Pinger Specifications: A pinger is an acoustic deterrent device which, when immersed in water, broadcasts a 10 kHz (± 2 kHz) sound at 132 dB (± 4 dB) re 1 micropascal at 1 m, lasting 300 milliseconds (± 15 milliseconds), and repeating every 4 seconds ($\pm .2$ seconds).

Pinger Attachment: A pinger must be attached at the end of each string of the gillnets and at the bridle of every net within a string of nets.

Pinger Training and Certification: Beginning January 1, 1999, the operator of a vessel may not fish with, set or haul back sink gillnets or gillnet gear, or allow such gear to be in closed areas where pingers are required unless the operator has satisfactorily completed the pinger certification training program and possesses on board the vessel a valid pinger training certificate issued by NMFS. For more information about training, please contact our NMFS Gear Liaison, John Higgins, at the Maine office at (207) 677-2316.

Pelagic Gillnet (Baitnet) Gear: During the marine mammal time/area closures a pelagic gillnet is defined as a single gillnet not capable of catching multispecies, not longer than 300 feet (91.4 m) and not greater than 6 feet (1.83 m) deep, with a maximum mesh size of 3 inches (7.6 cm); the net must be attached to the vessel, fished in the upper two-thirds of the water column and must be marked with the owner's name and vessel identification number.

NOTE: This document is provided as a summary of the requirements implemented by the HPTRP. For a complete description of the HPTRP regulations, see 50 CFR 229.33 (Gulf of Maine) and 50 CFR 229.34 (Mid-Atlantic) or visit the HPTRP web site at www.nero.noaa.gov/porptrp. Be advised that the HPTRP regulations may overlap with other Fishery Management Plan regulations. Please refer to the Northeast Multispecies regulations found at 50 CFR 648 for information about any overlapping Fishery Management Plan restricted areas. Should any regulations overlap with the HPTRP regulations, the more stringent regulations will apply.